RAIN-MAKING

Little information is available on the processes of rain-making among the Luo. Roscoe states that it is an important ceremony and is performed by a *musoga* priests who lives among the people for this purpose.(1) According to Northcote, the rain-maker is greatly esteemed, and his homestead is usually found near a big tree which is considered sacred. When rain is wanted, he gathers some herbs, puts them in a large pot of water and boils them under the tree. He draws off a little into another pot and, sucking it up through a reed, squirts it into the air, after first blowing through the reed and making the pot bubble.(2) Evans-Pritchard mentions that the Luo rain-maker is called the *won koth* and that sometimes his functions are combined with those of the *jabilo*. Rain-makers among the neighbouring Bantu seem to have a higher reputation than Luo *jakoth* and are often consulted. 789

WITCHCRAFT

Sickness is thought to be due either to the malevolence of a ghost or, more frequently, to magic worked by some envious person who wishes to bring misfortune on his victim.(3) In either case the aid of a witchdoctor is sought and he, by means of various incantations, discovers the cause and the culprit. A sorcerer may cause death by spearing the shadow of his victim, by working spells, by hiding certain objects near the house which bring sickness to the inmates. If a ghost is causing trouble the witch-doctor prescribes offerings and sacrifices necessary for appeasement. He also discovers thieves, conducts ordeals and divines the causes of events. He makes counter-magic to defend people against the activities of sorcerers and is the general prescriber of all cures. Johnston mentions a 'deeper magic' (*jankingo*) which, among the Gemi tribe is practised by the black-smiths.(4) 753 756 [754]

LIFE CYCLE

BIRTH

After the birth of a boy the mother stays inside the house for four days; for a girl, she stays inside for three days. The father of the child does not eat or sleep in the hut until the child begins to cut its teeth. 846

Twins are considered lucky; their arrival is attended by many ceremonies and by propitiatory dances. 845

PUBERTY

Until marriage, girls help their mothers in the fields and assist them in cooking and carrying. Boys help in herding the animals. At puberty both boys and girls have their front lower teeth extracted and for four days they remain in their homes. After this period they go about visiting [857] 881 304

(1) Roscoe, *The Northern Bantu*, 1915, p.292.
(2) Northcote, *J.R.A.I.*, 1907, p.64. (3) *Ibid.*
(4) *The Uganda Protectorate*, Vol.II, 1902.

4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11

originally came from the north-west. I imagine that the original possessors of these beads had considerable settlements in the neighbourhood of the Maragolia Hills, and that beads were continually being lost in the fields, and now when a heavy thunderstorm comes it washes some of the surface soil away and exposes an odd bead now and again. The supply of the blue Nya-Luo beads is of course quite inadequate for the population, and many make up for the scarcity with the ordinary blue *kiketi* bead.[1] Occasionally these ancient beads are green and yellow, but the usual colour is blue.

The Ja-Luo have a curious habit of shaving curved patterns on their heads (Fig. 11).

FIG. 11.—VIEW OF THE TOP OF A MAN'S HEAD; SHOWING HOW THE PATTERN IS SHAVED.

The young men often wear an armlet of cylindrical wooden blocks on the upper arm; the wooden blocks are coloured red with oxide of iron. A band similarly ornamented with wooden blocks is often worn round the forehead. Some of the older men wear the curved canine tooth of a hippo on the forehead. The tooth is ground down laterally till it is only about one-eighth of an inch in thickness; others wear the tooth of a wart hog attached to a necklace.

The Ja-Luo have a curious habit of standing on the top of an ant hill or in some prominent place on one leg with the flat of the other foot resting against the knee, reminding one of the attitude adopted by a stork; they will remain in this attitude quite comfortably for a considerable time. This habit is I believe characteristic of the Dinka and others of the tribes on the Nile south of Fashoda.

Miscellaneous customs.—If a person shuts the door behind him when he leaves a house, people at once say he is a witch doctor. If a wife does this to her husband, the husband will not enter her house again until she fetches a goat from her father and kills it. Similarly if a man is the culprit he has to kill a goat to avert the ill luck. If a house is struck by lightning and anybody is killed inside, the head of the village walks three times round the house with a red rooster and the house is then broken up and the wood utilized for any purpose.

Witchcraft, etc.—It is believed that people are killed by witchcraft; the person possessing the medicine has only to show it to a person in order to kill him; to save the person bewitched it is necessary to catch the wizard and to bring him to the patient and he can remove the spell, and the wizard has to pay a fine; this class of medicine man does not hide himself. There is a deeper kind of witchcraft which is only practised at night and with great secrecy. It is called Jamkingo; among the Gemi tribe many of the clan previously referred to who forge iron possess these powers.

[1] With the kind assistance of Mr. C. H. Read, of the British Museum, I examined the collections of beads at the Museum from various parts of the world, and I found yellow and blue beads of the exact colour and shape among the Egyptian antiquities and jasper beads identical in appearance to the Nya-Luo both from ancient Egypt, and also from excavations made on the site of some buried cities in Beluchistan.

10: Roscoe M-5 (ca. 1900)1915
FL11 Luo FL11

CHAPTER XXVI

SICKNESS, DEATH, BURIAL, WARFARE, INDUSTRIES, RELIGION AND RELATIONSHIPS

Treatment of the sick—ghostly possession—death and mourning—death of a wife—manner of conducting warfare—treatment of a warrior who has slain one of the enemy—agricultural pursuits—cow-keeping—oxen used as riding animals—mode of building—religious beliefs—terms of relationships.

Treatment of the sick. Sickness is thought to be due to one of two causes: it may be, and the people think most frequently is, the result of magic which has been worked by some person who wishes to give pain or even to cause death because of a grievance, real or imaginary; or it may be due to some ghost. Under either circumstance, when a serious case of sickness occurs, the family seek the aid of a medicine-man who by his various tests and incantations discovers the cause; and, in a case where magic has been worked, he not only discovers the cause but also discloses the name of the culprit, who is thereupon sought and asked to give his motive for afflicting the sick person, and is paid to release him from the spell. Should the man have intended to kill the other because he has suffered some discourtesy or received some offence at his hands, he would probably have speared his shadow, so that the sick person will die unless the spell or magic is removed. Again, it may be that some magic has been worked and certain objects have been hidden near the house which are causing the sickness; these have to be removed and the spell broken before any drugs or treatment will avail the sick man. The perpetrator will only remove these when his grievance has been settled and he has received the needful compensation. In the case of a ghost, the medicine-man will tell which ghost is working the trouble and why it is thus causing sickness.

763 755 [754] 753 755 775

11: Hartmann M-5 (ca. 1920)1928 FL11 Luo FL11

768 sick in the village and he witchdoctor says that the sickness is due to neglect of deceased's grave, and that they have to sacrifice a goat or a bull to propitiate him,
769 then they put some sticks round the grave again by way of a hut, in the doorway
753 of which they roast a chicken, and some blood of the sacrifice is put in a potsherd and placed on the grave.

769 On the anniversary of the death or thereabouts beer is brewn again. First however deceased's son visits the witchdoctor, who tels him to sacrifice a special
782 cock, e. g. a big black one, or one with an extra toe, or one with very short legs,
273 ect. Until such a cock is found, as indicated by the witchdoctor, the beer will be of no use. Then the chicken is roasted and eaten, except for one leg which is put on the grave and covered with a basket. Now the *wimbi* for the beer is coarsely ground and put in pots for fermenting. After twelve days the fermented *wimbi* is roasted and the next morning dried. Unground *wimbi* is soaked in water, which is strained off again, and the grain remains for 3 days in covered-pots in order to sprout, after which it is dried. When these ingredients are ready, then the next day another visit is paid to the witchdoctor, who again orders a special chicken to be sacrificed, this time e. g. a white one, which is killed and eaten in the morning. Now the
[824 wives and children of deceased only pick some seed-pods of a certain wild plant
301] (*ochok*) which they string like beads on the stalk of creeping grass *(modhono)*. These strings they put round their necks, and also round the necks of the water-vessels with which they go to the well to fetch water for the further preparations of the beer. The water is put out in the sun, and when it has become luke-warm, it is poured on the fermented *wimbi*, in big earthen pots. Next day the sprouted *wimbi* is ground and put in the beerpots too. The following morning early the relations put some of the beer, now ready, in a small vessel, which they put on the grave of deceased, with a reed in it, after which the people of the village take some of the beer and drink it. Presently they bring a cock which they suspend by its legs alive in the gateway of the kraal together with some secret medecine, and it remains hanging there till sunset. From 8 o'clock in the morning onwards all the relations, friends and neighbours come to partake of the beer, which is put in an enormus earthen pot *(mbiru)* in an open space outside, each visitor bringing his own reed for sucking the beer. Nobody can enter the kraal that day except by the gateway where the chicken is hanging, all the other entrances being closed up. And the chicken is hung in such a way that anyone entering has to touch it. Suppose a
● [754] person with an "evil eye" would enter for the purpose of bewitching somebody there, the medicine would start working on him; and he would leave the place with sore eyes, which would cause him much suffering. If this person, however, returns to the village, and owns up that he came there to bewitch somebody, he will be asked to spit on the ground, so that the person bewitched may not die; and doing so his eyes will heal again.

Beer is supplied to anybody entering the kraal for three days at a stretch. No food is cooked these days; if some food is brought from a neighbouring village they may take it but otherwise they live on beer only. All the children of round about, born about the time of persons death and called after him are carried by their mothers to this beer party. Each mother brings a cooked chicken and some

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

this tail behind and receives a present from her husband. Afterwards it is considered very bad manners for a married woman to serve food to her husband without putting on this tail. On the other hand, if the husband or any other man should touch the married woman's tail, it is considered that he wishes to bewitch her, and such an offence must be atoned for by the usual sacrifice of a goat.

430. PATTERN FREQUENTLY SHAVED ON MEN'S HEADS (JA-LUO)

The Ja-luo *pull out the incisors* in the lower jaw. It may also occur amongst these people, as amongst the Lango tribes to the north, that not only the four incisors, but even the canines, are taken out, at any rate from the mouths of boys. They *do not circumcise*, nor do they *scar or tattoo* their bodies, with the exception that women raise three parallel lines of dots in a semi-circle on either side of the body, the ends of the semi-circle meeting in front just below the navel, and again on the backbone. If a man has killed an enemy in war, he propitiates his enemy's spirit by shaving his head for three days after his return. Heads of men are also shaved in the pattern given in the accompanying illustration (Fig. 430).

The Ja-luo, together with tribes remotely allied in origin, such as the Sūk and Lango, *ornament the outer rim of the ear* in a remarkable manner. About fifteen small holes are pierced along the edge of the cartilage, and a flattened ring of brass (looking in shape rather like a melon seed) is inserted. Hanging on the outer side of the brass ring is a large blue glass bead. In the lowest hole towards the lobe a plain brass ring is inserted. Regarding these blue beads Mr. Hobley writes: "For a long time I thought these blue beads were ordinary trade beads of the variety known as 'kiketi'; but upon inquiry I found this idea was indignantly repudiated. It was explained to me that the beads were picked up in the fields in the neighbourhood of the Maragolia Hills* after a heavy thunderstorm, and it was believed that they descended with the rain." Some of the chiefs also wear bits of jasper and chalcedony with a fine circular hole. These beads were formerly of great value, and were purchased at the rate of one cow per bead. They are said to have been picked up in the same way. Their name for these beads is

* In North Kavirondo.

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

husband and runs away, the amount which he has already paid on her behalf is returned and the marriage is broken off. If a woman finds herself unmarried after a long period, it is customary for her to go to a chief or a rich man and state that she has come to stay and cook for him. In such case she is usually taken to wife, but a very small complimentary present is paid for her. Chiefs may have from ten to forty wives. The Ja-luo are, generally speaking, very moral. They do not intermarry in

436. EMPTYING THE FISH-BASKETS (JA-LUO)

the same clan, but a man may marry the daughter of one who bears the same name as himself.

The Ja-luo believe in *a supreme God* whom they call "Chieng." This, however, is the same name as the sun. When a man comes out of his house in the morning, he spits towards the east, and in the evening he spits towards the west. If the sunset is extremely red, it is said to indicate the approaching death of an important person. They believe that after death the spirits of the departed go up to the sky. If a hailstorm occurs, no one goes to work in the fields on the following day. Shooting stars are said to be a sign of war. They believe that people can be killed by *witchcraft*, and that a wizard has only to show "medicine" to a person

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

754 [683] in order to kill him. If a person is thought to be bewitched, the medicine man concerned is caught and forced to remove the spell, afterwards being punished by a fine. This kind of witchcraft, however, is not thought to be very serious. There is a deeper magic called "jamkingo." Amongst the Gemi tribe this is practised by the blacksmiths. It is of the nature of a secret society, and no doubt means secret poisoning. They have a 695 form of *ordeal* called "kiviri." A small pot of water is placed on the fire. A little "wimbi" flour and a bit of "medicine" are put into the water. If the water boils over, the man is guilty; if not, he is innocent. Another ordeal is as follows: A gourd basin with a large hole cut in the bottom is placed on a flat stone. Water is then poured into the calabash, the bottom of which being, of course, not close-fitting to the stone, would permit ordinarily of a leakage. But the medicine man who attends puts into the bottom of the calabash crushed-up leaves of a kind of mimosa which, for a time at least, stop the leakage and enable the calabash to be filled up with water, the retention of the water by the calabash proving the man to be innocent. Another ordeal is arranged in this way: Dry flour is given to the suspected person. If innocent, he can swallow it; if he is unable to moisten the flour with his saliva and swallow it, he is shown to be guilty.

781 As regards *omens*: If a bird sings on the left-hand side as a man 777 is starting on a journey, the journey, if for war, will be unlucky; but if it be merely a peaceful visit, it will be a fortunate one. If the bird sings on the right-hand side, it is a good omen for war, but a bad one for an ordinary visit. If a cat crosses the road from right to left, it is a good omen; if from left to right, bad. If a rat is seen on the road, and it runs along the road ahead of the man, it is a good omen; but if it crosses the road from one side to the other, it is an unlucky sign. If on a journey a man strikes the little toe of either foot, it is a very bad sign; if he strikes the big toe, it is propitious. If the eldest child of a man is a boy, and the man sets out to travel, it will be an unlucky sign if the first person he meets is also a man. On the other hand, if his eldest child is a girl, and he meets a woman when he starts on a journey, that is likewise a bad sign. They profess to be able to foretell events by 787 *divining*, and the divination is exercised on the entrails of an ox or sheep. They are a good deal given to prophesying. The chief Odua when quite a lad prophesied the coming of the white man, and this at a time when no white man had entered the country. They believe in rain-makers.

846 [844] On the occasion of a *birth* the infant, if a boy, is kept inside the house for four days; if a girl, for three days. When a birth takes place, the female neighbours attend, and a goat is killed for the mother and the other women. No man is allowed in the hut until three or four days have elapsed. The father of the child does not eat or sleep again in the

16: Northcote G-5 (no date) 1907 FL11 Luo FL11

together again, and singly or in twos and threes run out and go through a fight with some invisible foes, again presumably, the evil spirits. They are very serious all the while, and the rest watch in silence their champions as they charge, retreat and cower down behind the huge shields. Then comes more feasting, with the customary offering to the sun, and finally they disperse. 764

The wailing is kept up in the case of a chief for six days, and performed twice a day at sunrise and sunset, but after the day of the dance each village mourns by itself; for a common person three days is the limit.

The corpse is buried in a recumbent position in the deceased's hut, but the hut continues to be occupied, generally by the deceased man's heir; it is not at once destroyed or disused, as some authorities, among them Sir C. Eliot, maintain. Last of all, when the mourning is over, an offering of beer, grain, and chicken flesh, is put on the grave.

The Jaluo religion is extremely slight. They worship the sun, and to a less extent the moon. They regard the sun as a deity seldom beneficent, more often malignant, and usually apathetic; as one of them said to the writer, "It does not matter how much you pray, you fall sick and die just the same." The offerings made at all important occasions in their daily life they make more with the idea of appeasing him than of obtaining positive benefits. 776 781 782

Witchcraft, however, and demonology occupy their minds far more. The wizard is greatly dreaded, and it is easy for an unscrupulous Kavirondo to obtain his neighbour's property by accusing him of having killed one of his relations by witchcraft, knowing that he will have his neighbours' support and sympathy. The wizard is sought both for good and evil purposes; his aid is invoked alike to detect criminals and to do harm to an adversary. In a recent case brought before the writer a man was accused of having murdered one of his wives by witchcraft. According to his accusers, the supposed murderer missed his razor and accused two of his wives of the theft. They both denied all knowledge of the missing article, and he gave them till the evening of that day to find it. When their term of grace came to an end, and the razor was not produced, he was alleged to have struck one of his wives, who was on the point of bearing a child. He then produced two charms which he affixed to their respective huts, threatening that the thief would be detected by the charm and would die. Next day the woman who was said to have been struck died after producing a still-born child. The curious result was that the man was tried for murder, the accusers believing that the crime had been committed by witchcraft, and the magistrate holding that, if the man caused his wife's death at all, it was by the blow which he was alleged to have given her. The blow turned out to be a myth, and the man was discharged, much to his accusers' disgust. 754 754 674

When a Kavirondo wishes to kill his enemy secretly, the usual method is to bury a dead rat or chicken at his victim's door. If, when the latter comes out the next morning, he treads on the spot where the animal is buried, it is believed that he will die that day. 754

16: Northcote G-5 (no date) 1907 FL11 Luo FL11

754 The evil eye, it is claimed, can make a sound man sick, and kill a man who is
755 ill, or an unborn child. Most diseases are attributed to the evil eye or to
757 malignant spirits, and so the best remedy is to make as much noise near the sick man as possible, in order to drive the evil ones away. In addition to this universal remedy, the Jaluo use a considerable variety of herbal medicines, and they are also expert at wet and dry cupping. Sometimes, however, the treatment is of a distinctly quack nature. Some time ago a native practitioner brought a case of assault against the husband of one of his patients. The defence set up was that the accused called in the prosecutor to treat his wife, and that the latter, after much cogitation, ordered the woman to climb to the roof of her hut and stay there till she was better. Unfortunately, the patient died under her open-air cure; her husband laid her death at the doctor's door and took steps to settle his account with the professor of healing arts, with a club. On another occasion the writer was summoned to an accident in the lime quarry in the district. One of the injured was suffering from a broken thigh and internal injuries. He put on a temporary splint, sent for the Indian apothecary, and gave orders that the patient was not to be moved in the "interim." Next day, however, the apothecary found, [752] on arriving at the scene of the accident, that a Kavirondo surgeon had been called in; the latter was much puzzled by the complications of the case, and, in order to make a better diagnosis, cut the man open, with the not unnatural result that he died.

789 But, although the wizard is held in abhorrence and dread, the rain-maker is greatly esteemed: his success probably depends upon a knowledge of the signs of the heavens, but his methods are as follows: His village is to be found as a rule near a big tree, which he asserts is sacred; when rain is wanted he gathers some herbs and puts them in a large pot containing water, which he boils beneath the holy tree. Of the decoction thus prepared he draws off a little into a smaller pot, above which he squats on his haunches. Next a reed is produced, and through this the rain-maker draws up a little of the liquid and then squirts it forth into the air after blowing through the reed and causing the fluid in the pot to bubble; the whole process being punctuated by voluble mutterings and *abracadabra*. A reputation for uncanny powers, however, can be obtained even more easily than this, as the following anecdote will show. Some time ago, during the lesser rains, the natives of the valley in which the writer's station is situate, came and complained that a famous rain-maker was deflecting all the rain to the hills, so that the crops in the valley were dying. Would the Bwana (master) send a policeman and arrest the evil-doer? The Bwana did not see his way to such an arbitrary proceeding, but, being curious to see the wizard, scribbled a few crooked lines on a sheet of paper and told the applicants to show this to the rain-maker as a sign that the Bwana wished to speak with him. Next day they came back and said that the wizard had refused to come for the reason that the letter was not genuine but had emanated from an Indian shopkeeper; the writer told them to wait a few days, meaning to postpone the matter *sine die*. It so happened, however, that that evening a tremendous

19:Wilson E-5 (ca. 1950) 1960
FL11 Luo FL11

because a ghost of a virgin who has reached puberty was regarded as extremely dangerous. The defloration, still practiced in parts of Luo today, was regarded as satisfying her natural desire to bear children.

The spirits of warriors killed in battle were placated by the tribe as a whole in ceremonial and ritual held at the borders of the tribal land (*thim*) by *poro bilo* and *tero buru*, where sacrifices were made and the tribal ancestors placated to welcome the ghost of the hero. The affair became a tribal responsibility, whereas normally death is regarded as a responsibility of the family or minor lineage segment.

A person who found the body of a man or of a woman would commence wailing as a closely related mourner. If the body turned out to be that of a person among whose clan the finder could marry, then a wife or husband was found for the finder in the belief that the spirit of the deceased planned and directed the discovery of the body to the end that the group of the finder should be united in marriage with that of the deceased.

Witches, if caught in the act of "running about at night," were killed instantly and with equanimity. The body of a person killed as a witch was mutilated by driving a stake into the rectum after which the body would be thrown into its village. An old custom still associated with this is the insistence of the relatives of a woman who died suddenly, or inexplicably, to examine her body for signs of having been a witch. Female witches are believed to be trained by their husbands to run at night with them and, because they are weaker, are frequently caught and killed. Bride-wealth may not be reclaimed or, if not finally paid, must be completed by her husband if a woman is killed under these circumstances.

Accidental deaths are regarded as having been inspired by the ancestors, and therefore require placation of the spirit of the ancestor divined as having been responsible. Deaths from sickness are believed to come from many causes, the chief of

19:Wilson E-5 (ca. 1950) 1960
FL11 Luo FL11

159 the murdered man, to mourn his death, to placate his spirit,
768 and to retain the grey ash medicine left over from the first
769 cleansing to be used when necessary to remove the danger of his ghost returning to harm members of the clan. An old woman past child bearing, *pim*, was selected and agreed to perform these functions. She was given animals for this service and a hut was built for her outside the village, where she placated the spirit of the dead man.

159 Most Joluo will agree that when a witch is killed, the dead
682 man's relatives do not take legal action but try to cover up the incident. This is not difficult in Luo society. One case did,
754 however, occur during the period of this study which could not be hidden from the authorities.

Case No. 2.

A youth of seventeen was escorting his sister from a marriage ceremony back to their village some miles away. It was late at night or early in the morning, time could not accurately be assessed, when suddenly an apparition appeared in the path of the couple. It was a naked man—swerving, jumping, screaming, and brandishing fire which glowed red as he waved his arms. The night was very dark and to the young couple the apparition appeared as a ghost. The woman fled the way she had come but the youth in his frantic effort to escape stumbled and fell. The "ghost" was on top of him instantly, clawing at his face and throat. The youth had a sheath knife in his belt and frantically struck out blindly several times as he managed to struggle free. He fled back to the village from which he came. A party of youths and men armed themselves and set out to search for and kill the witch but were unable to find the exact spot in the darkness.

159 Next morning a body was found, naked, and with several
682 stab wounds on it. The man was identified, and the finder,

19:Wilson E-5 (ca. 1950) 1960
FL11 Luo FL11

propriate prestige of beer parties and entertainment of his father's friends. On the day of the suicide, a group of the father's friends arrived at the village and the father asked his son's wife to prepare food and drink for them. This she refused to do, so that night he burned himself in his house, which the Luo believe brought ruin to the lineage and particularly to his son.

The next case is an interesting one because it illustrates an inherent Luo trait: the profound jealousy of anyone who is successful.

Suicide Case No. 9.

The man who died was the brother of the suicide in case number 2, and took the latter's wives as leviratic wives. He also inherited his gardens. Shortly after this, he began to prosper phenomenally. The elders state that his cattle produced mostly heifers and some produced twin heifers. His crops were better than his neighbors, so they began soon to suspect him of witchcraft. In the space of a few years as his prosperity increased, he was more and more ostracized from the activities of the community. The final blow came when his own *libamba*, minimal lineage group, denied him entrance to a lineage sacrifice on the grounds that he was a witch. Ten years after his brother's suicide, almost to a day, he hanged himself.

When the elders were questioned as to whether or not this man was a witch, they replied that he could not possibly have been a witch, because he had committed suicide. If he were a witch, his medicine would have been so powerful that the effect of being ostracized by the community would not have bothered him at all, let alone driven him to suicide.

The Luo believe that those most likely to commit suicide are those who have descended from a lineage in which there has been a history of suicide. Case number 2 was the brother of case number 9, and case number 5 the son of case number

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

modern maternity wards have weakened the custom, since women stay in them for seven days and return home after having shown the baby to many of their friends.

Protection against witches. Although Christian mothers are not affected by this kind of superstition, pagan mothers still tie things around the necks of their babies to protect them from malignant glances, these articles being attached when the children are exposed to the view of relatives and friends. Most people believe that babies can be bewitched as soon as their skin begins to darken, and the pagans believe that through magic an ill-disposed person can introduce a worm into the baby's stomach. If this occurs, the baby cries and vomits whenever it is suckled by its mother. In the past when no clothes were worn, it was believed that the mother's breast could also be bewitched. The tradition was that every living person had a beneficial worm in the stomach, and that this worm digested the food eaten. When the worm refused to digest the food, there would be serious stomach trouble which might prove fatal. When a child was bewitched it was believed that its beneficial worm had been replaced by a harmful one.

Protection against this harmful worm could supposedly be gained by scratching the body of the child (the forehead, the palm, or the flat of the foot) with some medicine, and it is still said that, if the medicine is sufficiently strong, any evil-eyed man looking at the child with the intention of bewitching it will lose his eyesight. Some fragments of bones or roots of herbs may also be worn for the same purpose. Many of these customs have disappeared in strongly Christianized areas, the Christians themselves having sometimes taken direct action to stamp them out, but nurses are still warned not to let young children play on the roadside, in order to protect their charges from being bewitched.